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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BEIJING 003463

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SUBJECT: PACOM COMMANDER ADMIRAL KEATING'S MEETING WITH
VICE FOREIGN MINISTER ZHANG YESUI

Classified By: Acting Deputy Chief of Mission Daniel Shields.
Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

1. (C) The United States' and China's common interests are "on the rise" in response to increasingly diversified global threats, Vice Foreign Minister (VFM) Zhang Yesui told United States Pacific Command (PACOM) Commander Admiral Timothy J. Keating on May 11. Zhang said China wants to continue to cooperate with the United States on "hot spot" issues such as Iran, North Korea and Sudan/Darfur. China also hopes to sustain and enhance positive momentum in bilateral relations stemming from increased senior and working level exchanges, including military-to-military ties. China requires sufficient military forces to uphold its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity, Zhang noted, stating that moderate increases in military spending are both necessary and appropriate. Failure to curb pro-independence separatist activities in Taiwan in a timely manner will create severe problems for cross Strait relations and the Asia-Pacific region, the Vice Foreign Minister cautioned. The United States and China must cooperate and coordinate to prevent the situation from getting "out of control," Zhang added.

2. (C) Admiral Keating responded that the United States upholds our one-China policy based on the three joint communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act. If the United States and China work together carefully and closely, we can reduce, if not eliminate, the chance for confusion, error or missteps. Admiral Keating underscored that the post-9/11 world also presents opportunities for the United States and PRC militaries to work together in new ways, citing counterterrorism and disaster response. End Summary.

PRC: Positive Momentum In Bilateral Ties

3. (C) Given the diverse security threats of a globalized world, enhanced United States-China military cooperation bears special significance and meaning, VFM Zhang said. China is pleased with overall positive momentum in United States-China bilateral relations, characterized by frequent and close contacts between leaders and at other levels of

the two countries? governments. President Bush and President Hu have kept in close touch by phone, correspondence and other channels and will meet again at the ?G-8 plus 5? outreach session. They have also agreed to expand military-to-military ties, which are part and parcel of bilateral relations and enhance mutual trust. Secretary Rice and new Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi held good discussions in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. Executive Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo will travel to Washington next month for the next round of the Senior Dialogue. Such exchanges have led to productive bilateral cooperation and enhanced cooperation and coordination on regional and international issues. China hopes the momentum can be sustained and further developed. Noting he sat in on a Strategic Economic Dialogue (SED)-related call between Treasury Secretary Paulson and Vice Premier Wu Yi earlier on May 11, VFM Zhang said he would accompany Wu to Washington for SED II later this month.

Taiwan

14. (C) China and the United States must work together to "properly handle" the Taiwan issue, VFM Zhang said, adding that Taiwan is China's top concern and involves China's core interests. It is very important, Zhang said, for the United States and China to work jointly to prevent the Taiwan situation from getting "out of control." Recently, Chen Shui-bian and his authorities have stepped up activities to pursue Taiwan independence. Failure to curb pro-independence separatist activities in a timely manner will create

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severe problems for cross Strait relations and the Asia-Pacific region.

15. (C) In response, Admiral Keating affirmed that the United States upholds our one-China policy based on the three joint communiqu7s and the Taiwan Relations Act. PACOM is acutely aware of PRC sensitivities to political rhetoric in Taiwan, but the President has directed PACOM to preserve regional peace and stability and PACOM will fulfill that mission based on an assessment of hard facts. If the United States and China work together carefully and closely, we can reduce, if not eliminate, the chance for confusion, error or missteps.

PRC: Common Interests On The Rise

16. (C) Admiral Keating underscored that the post-9/11 world also presents opportunities for the United States and Chinese militaries to work together in new ways, citing counterterrorism and disaster response. The United States is willing to work with China in these areas to reinforce mutual interests in regional peace and stability. PACOM has a strong desire to contribute to stronger and more meaningful bilateral relations, Admiral Keating stressed.

17. (C) China fully agrees that our common interests are "on the rise" in response to increasingly diversified threats, Zhang replied. The United States and China can have better cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. China welcomes the positive presence of the United States in the region and respects the United States' reasonable interests and concerns. China and the United States can work together for regional peace and stability, Zhang added.

PRC Seeks "Hot Spot" Cooperation

18. (C) International "hot spot" issues represent another important dimension to enhanced United States-China bilateral ties, Zhang noted, citing cooperation on Iran, North Korea and Sudan/Darfur. The United States and China enjoy a "pool" of common interests in addressing these hot spot issues. Differences remain and the two countries will not always see eye-to-eye, but the United States and China share the same overall objectives. On Iran, both oppose nuclear weapons for Iran, both want the international nonproliferation regime strengthened and both agree that negotiation is the only effective way to resolve the Iran nuclear issue. Both countries are working hard on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. China and the United States increasingly cooperate on Sudan/Darfur. China recently appointed a Special Envoy for African Affairs whose top priority at present will be to take an active part on behalf of the PRC government in international efforts to resolve Darfur. China will send 275 engineers to the region to help implement phase two of the Annan plan and will continue to provide humanitarian assistance. China is pleased with recent positive developments, made possible by the concerted efforts of the international community, including the United States and China, Zhang said.

19. (C) Admiral Keating thanked VFM Zhang for China's positive role in the Six-Party Talks and said the United States is pleased to see incremental progress toward a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. It is challenging to force progress on a North Korean regime that is reluctant to move forward. Congress follows the issue closely and in Congressional testimony PACOM has been pleased to report that our military assessment is that progress is being made, Admiral Keating said. The Admiral noted that in response to United States lawmakers' questions about PACOM's military-to-military relations with China, in light of the PRC's significant military growth, he has stated that the United States and China share the goals of increased transparency and communication.

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PRC: "Appropriate" Defense Policy

10. (C) China's national military policy is defensive in nature, VFM Zhang said. China has unique national conditions and characteristics, including fourteen neighboring countries and lengthy land and sea borders measuring many thousands of kilometers. China requires appropriate military forces to uphold its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Moderate increases in military spending are both necessary and appropriate. A country's military intentions must be assessed through its policy orientation, not the strength of its military, Zhang remarked.

11. (C) Admiral Keating noted that a key part of his job is to travel the region to sustain and invigorate the friendships that create the solid foundation for good bilateral relations. He said he looks forward to future visits to China to explore China's vast land and maritime borders, in order to gain a better understanding of China's challenges. Border security is a significant challenge for both countries and will require interagency and international solutions. The United States is happy to share lessons learned with China, the Admiral added.

12. (C) In response, Zhang said he fully echoed the Admiral's thoughts and the key task for the United

States and China will be to increase mutual understanding through face-to-face contacts. Government-to-government, military-to-military and people-to-people exchanges all should be increased. Despite globalization's many scientific and technological advances, face-to-face contacts prove to be the most valuable exchanges. China's policymakers make a conscious effort to understand the United States in a "more objective and correct way." United States colleagues should also analyze events in China from a more comprehensive and correct perspective. Despite its economic growth, China faces many development challenges. The United States media still harbors many misconceptions about China, Zhang said. The Beijing Olympics, Admiral Keating observed, will provide an opportunity for many visitors from all over the world to gain first-hand exposure to Beijing and China. The Admiral extended an offer to VFM Zhang to visit PACOM headquarters in the future.

¶13. (C) Note: The MFA substituted VFM Zhang for Assistant Foreign Minister He Yafei the morning of the meeting. With Yang Jiechi's promotion to Foreign Minister, VFM Zhang will temporarily hold the North American and Oceanian Affairs portfolio. In response to Admiral Keating's invitation to visit PACOM headquarters, VFM Zhang told Admiral Keating that he last visited Hawaii ten years ago in his former capacity as Chief Protocol Officer for then-President Jiang Zemin. End Note.

¶14. Participants:

United States:

Admiral Timothy J. Keating, Commander of United States Pacific Command
Ambassador Clark T. Randt, US Embassy Beijing
Brigadier General Ralph Jodice, Defense Attache, US Embassy Beijing
Ravic R. Huso, Foreign Policy Advisor to Commander, United States Pacific Command
Chief Master Sergeant James A. Roy
Captain Gregory M. Nosal, Executive Assistant for the Commander of United States Pacific Command
Captain William J. Alderson, Public Affairs Officer
Colonel Mark Gillette, Army Attache, US Embassy Beijing
Lieutenant Colonel Roger Cavazos, Senior Country Director, United States Pacific Command
Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Reisdorff, Assistant Army Attache, US Embassy Beijing
Mr. Alan Pessin, Voice of America
Elise Williamson, Political Officer, US Embassy

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Beijing
Dante Paradiso, Notetaker
Jim Brown, Interpreter

PRC:

MFA Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui
Deputy Director General Xie Feng, MFA North American & Oceanian Affairs Department
Major Gen. Qian Lihua, Foreign Affairs Office Deputy Director, MND
Sr. Col. Huang Xueping, Deputy Director, American and Oceania Department, Foreign Affairs Office, MND
Counselor Wang Baodong, MFA North American & Oceanian Affairs Department
Major Cheng Kai, Staff Officer, American and Oceania Department, Foreign Affairs Office, MND
Zhang Lu, MFA Interpreter
Wei Jin (notetaker), MFA North American & Oceanian Affairs Department

¶15. (C) Admiral Keating cleared this cable.
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